

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

Initially, Applicants note that the Examiner has acknowledged the Applicants' claim for foreign priority (see page 2 of the Office action, first item 1), but has still not acknowledged the receipt of the certified copy of the priority document, as previously requested. As previously explained, the USPTO's Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system indicates that this document was received on October 24, 2001 and has been scanned into the image file wrapper (IFW) of the instant application. Therefore, Applicants hereby request that the Examiner acknowledge the claim for foreign priority and the receipt of certified copies of the priority document by marking the boxes next to items "12)", "a)", and "1." under the heading "Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119" on the next "Office Action Summary" (Form PTOL-326) or "Notice of Allowance" (Form PTOL-37) issued by the Examiner.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) and have been cancelled by amendment herein. Thus, the rejection has been rendered moot by the amendment.

Applicants appreciate the allowability of claims 3-7. Claims 3-7 have each been amended to place them in independent form including all of the limitations of the respective base claim.

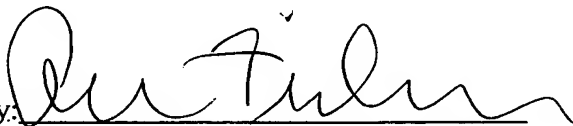
In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the

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application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 34109.

Respectfully submitted,
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